1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Not all the caves investigated yielded evidence of prehistoric habitation, but from a certain number were obtained quartz, chert and shell implements which put the matter beyond doubt and conclusively show that Ceylon formerly possessed a stone age. The greater part of the volume is taken up by an account of prehistoric quartz and chert artifacts, and the excellent reproductions given by the authors show that the quartz implements they discovered belong to the same type as those found by ourselves and described elsewhere[1].

But in addition the Sarasins found hammer stones, a few pieces of worked bone, and a series of shells of the large land snail (*Helix phoenix*), the curve of each shell being occupied by a circular hole large enough to allow of its sharp edge being used as a cutting tool[2].

Plate VIII shows a number of typical Vedda implements. All are of quartz except No. 2 which is of chert. Nos. 1 and 3 are worked on one side only, the unworked side being shown in order to illustrate the well-marked bulb of percussion which distinguishes many of the specimens. The general characteristics of these implements are so well shown in the plate that a description in detail is not necessary. Attention may, however, be called to figures 6, 8 and 9; the first of these shows a large part of the outer surface of the quartz pebble from which it was made. No. 8 belongs to a type of which numerous examples occur among European stone implements, this specimen is thicker than is usual and measures 15 mm. from one surface to the other. No. 9 can scarcely have been intended for anything but an arrow head, two views are given of this remarkable implement which comes from a cave on the Scarborough Estate at Maskeliya, and for a drawing of which I am indebted to Mr Pole. No. 2 is of chert and was found in the same cave; two views of this implement are given. The localities from which the other specimens were collected were as follows: No. 1 was found by Mr Pole at Maskeliya, No. 3 we picked up at Bandarawela, No. 4 was collected by Mr Green

[1] C. G. Seligmann, "Quartz Implements from Ceylon," *Man*, 1908, 63.

[2] These shells in fact constitute a primitive plane or spokeshave and resemble those found in Queensland and some parts of South America at the present day.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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Plate VIII

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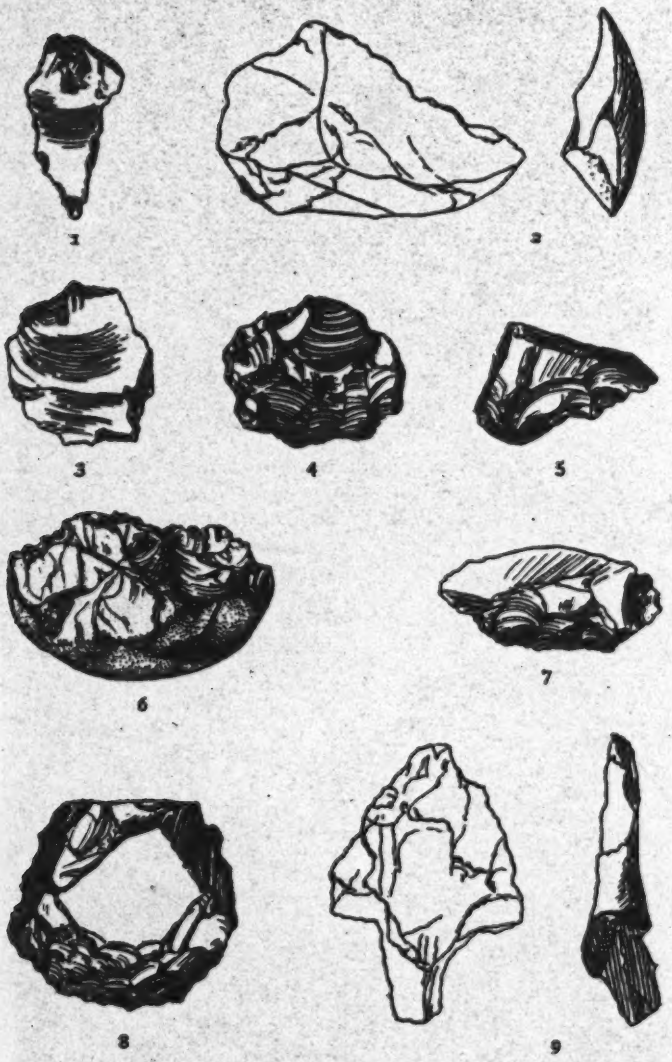

Quartz and chert implements

[Facing p. 20]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

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near Peradeniya, Nos. 5, 6, 7, and 8 are in Mr Pole's collection and were found by him near Maskeliya.

The questions raised by the discovery of implements such as those figured are so many and interesting that no excuse is needed for considering some of the issues at length. The data are the caves excavated by the Sarasins in which prehistoric implements were found, and our own work in Ceylon including the partial excavation of the Bendiyagalge caves which are described and figured in Chapter IV.

In the first place if we accept the suggestion that Veddas, the ancestors of those still existing, are responsible for these implements, their distribution will give valuable information as to the former extent of the Vedda country. It may be said at once that the distribution of these implements, as far as it is at present known, agrees with our historic knowledge of the extent of the Vedda domain, and adds to it the heights of Uva up to about 4000 feet (Bandarawela), the country around Kandy, and the hill country to the south (Gampola) and in the neighbourhood of Adam's Peak (Maskeliya)[1]. And since they have been found in the neighbourhood of Matale they add an interesting confirmation to what Mr Parker has said on p. 9 concerning the former occurrence of Veddas in this part of the country. Within the last few months the range of these implements has been extended south to the neighbourhood of Ratnapura, where a number of excellent specimens were found by the late James Parsons, who wrote to us concerning them as follows: "I dug out a cave in Sabaragamuwa in a ravine to the north-east of Ratnapura which was most interesting. I have full notes of the cave—briefly it is sufficiently high above the stream for it to have been impossible for it to enter the cave in

[1] We consulted the late James Parsons, Director of the Mineral Survey, concerning the geological formation of the rounded grassy hills near Bandarawela called *patanas*, upon which we had independently collected many quartz artifacts. He informed us that the capping of these hills usually consists of more or less disintegrated granular quartz rock, but that this did not seem to contain nearly enough clear quartz to produce the flakes even as a "survival of the fittest" in the process of disintegration. Parsons did however find several water-worn pebbles, all broken, but there were not enough to lead him to think they represented a capping gravel, although in the case of the Peradeniya locality there is no doubt that there is river gravel on the hill.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

geologically recent times. To a depth of 8 feet the cave is full of black earth containing many shells of the big tree snail mixed with the river shells, *bellan* (*Paludina ceylonica*), in such abundance that these shells are now occasionally collected and burnt for chunam. A shell is said to occur that is found only in the river at Ratnapura, but I did not succeed in finding it. The tradition is that the molluscs were used as food by 'an ancient Tamil people.' The shells are not calcined, but with them were a number of flakes of clear quartz—mostly made from pebbles, some of them the best I have seen and undoubtedly neolithic.... I do not think there can be any reasonable doubt about them. At a depth of five feet very rotten fragments of the top of a human skull and the region of the ear besides bits of long bones and some pieces of chert not obviously worked. At the entrance of the cave there is a sort of dyke thrown up, which is full of flakes some of which appear to be ground and polished."

Parsons' premature death renders it unlikely that a full account of this find will ever be published, but owing to the kindness of Mrs Parsons we have been able to examine a number of the implements excavated by her husband. These include a number of cores, worked flakes and scrapers, and one flake of chert showing a bulb of percussion, but none of the specimens that I have handled show any signs of polishing[1].

[1] Since the above was written we have received the following account of the cave from Mr W. D. Holland on whose property we understand the cave is situated. "The cave is situated about a mile from my bungalow on the N. bank of a small stream and some 10 to 15 feet above present water level. The cave has been formed by the weathering out of a soft core of rock from gneiss of the ordinary kind and may have been assisted by the action of the stream when running at a higher level. The cave is a fairly large one and would accommodate several families, say 15 or 20 individuals, and is quite dry inside. It appears to have been banked up in front, but this may have been caused by debris falling from the cliff above. The strike I believe coincides with the stream S.W. N.W. We dug a pit about 5 feet in diameter and about 7 or 8 feet deep, and came upon a lot of shells of the *belan* or water snail and some bones: a much shattered portion of the latter we thought to be a portion of a human skull, and Mr Parsons subsequently informed me by letter that this had been confirmed in Colombo....The quartz flakes were not found in the cave, but on the entrance bank where they had been exposed by the drip from the rock above washing the earth away and leaving them. The old inhabitants would naturally work at the entrance for the sake of light. I know only of this one cave in this neighbourhood. The stream flows S.W. to the Kaluganga (eventually), and